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Youth charged in two TD Bank robberies

INVESTIGATION A 16-year-old male has been charged in connection with two separate east-end robberies that took place at TD Canada Trust banks in mid-February.

The accused, who cannot be named because of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, is charged with two counts of robbery, two counts of wearing a disguise during the commission of an offence, and failure to comply with a youth sentence.

On Feb. 18, Ottawa police officers responded to a call just before 8 p.m. at a TD Canada Trust bank on Montreal Road, where a person had entered the bank, passed a note demanding money and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash.

Two days later, at about 7:15 p.m. a person repeated those steps at another TD Canada Trust branch, located on Watters Road.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Robbery Section at 613-236-1222 ext. 5116, or Crime Stoppers at 613-233-8477.

KATHRYN YOUNG
/FOR METRO OTTAWA

Riding the Recession

Now through the end of March, Metro will share advice on how to cut down on expenses and navigate your way through the recession.

Canada
• The recession isn't only hitting your pocketbook; cities are seeing a decrease when it comes to their recycling programs, pg 4

Comments & Views
• Anne Hines gives us a lesson in recession etiquette, pg 7

Tomorrow
• Inexpensive exercise options that won't make you break an economic sweat, and Josey Vogels tells you what the economy means for online dating.



WE RECYCLE



Norwegian Ambassador Tor Berntin Næss, front, and four-time Norwegian speedskating Olympic gold winner Johann Olav Koss, second, lead a team of skiers on giant eight-person skis during Norway Day yesterday at Gatineau Park's Relais Plein Air. Story, pg 3.

Skating season in record stretch?

KATHRYN YOUNG
for Metro Ottawa

ficer for the National Capital Commission, which maintains the world's largest skating rink.

Although the canal was closed Friday and Saturday, it reopened yesterday morning from the National Arts Centre to Dow's Lake.

The 7.8-kilometre skateway opened for the season on Jan. 1 and has had only six days of closure due to mild weather, leaving 53 skating days as of yesterday. A year ago, however, people enjoyed only 34 days of skating af-

ter the canal finally opened on Jan. 25.

The longest skating season to date was 1971-72, when it lasted 95 days. The shortest season was 34 days in 2001-02, but only 26 days were skateable. The average skating season in the last five years has been 50 days.

The NCC doesn't want to predict how long this year's season will last, said Guèvremont.

"We're very happy," she said. "Let's hope that Mother Nature co-operates."

Afghan war cannot be won: PM

Says Canada won't give more help without clear strategy

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said yesterday the insurgency in Afghanistan cannot be defeated and Canada would not provide more troops without a clear exit strategy.

Harper said in a CNN interview that Afghanistan needs an indigenous government that can manage the insurgency and is not perceived as foreign-installed.

"We are not going to win this war just by staying," Harper said. "My own judgment is, quite frankly, that we are not going to ever defeat the insurgency."

"We have to have an Afghan government that is capable of managing that insurgency and improving its own governance," he told CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS.

U.S.-led forces toppled the Islamist Taliban government in 2001 for harbouring the al-Qaida network responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks against the United States. But a Taliban insurgency has steadily gained ground in the last few years.

U.S. President Barack Obama, who has ordered more U.S. troops to Afghanistan to stem the rising violence, visited Harper on his first trip abroad on Feb. 19, but he did not press the Canadian leader for additional

NATO mission

• Canada has about 2,700 soldiers based in Kandahar in southern Afghanistan as part of the NATO mission. The Canadian mission is due to end in 2011. More than 100 Canadian soldiers have been killed in the conflict.

military contributions.

Harper said he welcomed Obama's renewed commitment to Afghanistan and his plan to send more American troops there.

"But over the long haul, if President Obama wants anybody to do more, I would ask very hard questions about what is the strategy for success and for an eventual departure," he said.

Harper said his view of Afghan history was that the country

has been in a permanent state of insurgency.

"If we think that we are going to govern Afghanistan for the Afghans or over the long term be responsible for day-to-day security in Afghanistan and see that country improve, we are mistaken."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

REUTERS

ShareYourViews

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An eight-week-old Boston terrier puppy that was stolen from a pet store in the Carlingwood Mall Feb. 15 has been recovered unharmed and returned to its rightful owners after Ottawa police arrested a suspect. Richard Marcel Dore, 35, of Ottawa was charged with break, enter and theft in relation to the incident. METRO OTTAWA

Local



Cops search for robber after banks hit

At about 3:30 p.m. Thursday, a suspect, left, entered the CIBC in the Gloucester Centre on Ogilvie Road, demanded money and was given an undisclosed amount of cash. At 5:05 p.m., the same suspect repeated his demand at the Bank of Nova Scotia in the Beaconsfield Mall, but fled on foot after not getting any money. The suspect is described as a white man, 25 to 30 years old, five-foot-10, slim to medium build, clean shaven, with short hair, wearing a black-and-white baseball cap, sunglasses, a black zip-up jacket, blue jeans and carrying a small black bag. METRO OTTAWA

Smokes, cash targets of armed robbery

HEIST The Food Frenzy Convenience Store at 2910 Carling Ave. was robbed at gunpoint over the weekend.

At about 4:40 a.m. Saturday, two male suspects armed with a gun entered the store and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash and cigarettes.

The suspects are described as black males wearing black jackets, one was five-foot-eight and the other was five-foot-six.

No injuries were reported. METRO OTTAWA

Cops seek help for missing youth

KATHRYN YOUNG
for Metro Ottawa



Ottawa police are asking for the public's help in locating a 12-year-old runaway who has been missing for four days.

Iain Gardham, who will turn 13 in April, left his west-end school at lunchtime last Thursday and has not been seen since.

"There's no indication

of foul play or abduction," said Sgt. Mark Houldsworth of the Youth Intervention and Diversion Section.

"The working premise is still that he planned to run away," Houldsworth said.

"There was a plan and some thought was put into it. He had some resources to assist him."

The boy is described as white, five-foot-two, 105 pounds, with light brown

shaggy hair below his ears, and hazel eyes.

He is believed to be wearing dark blue jeans, an orange winter jacket, and either grey winter boots or white-and-red Nike shoes.

"They are not sure which ones he would have on," said Houldsworth. "It's one of those, where you go to school you may have

the winter boots on, but no one noticed what he was wearing when he left."

Houldsworth said police have had some possible sightings reported by members of the public, but nothing that has been confirmed.

He said that youth on the run tend to be transient, roaming all over the city, which

makes it more difficult for police to find them.

"We don't go to the media every day," he said. Police usually deal with about 10 runaways at a time, who are generally older teenagers. However, this boy is so young that they've asked the public for help. "He's still 12."

Anyone who has seen the boy should contact police at 613-236-1222 ext. 5355 or call Crime Stoppers at 613-233-8477.



OC Transpo may put breaks on bus buys

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The transit strike could end up costing OC Transpo more than two dozen new buses.

In order to make up for an estimated \$22.7-million budgetary shortfall, due primarily to the strike, city staff are recommending OC Transpo put off acquiring 25 new buses this year to save \$16.3 million and reduce the capital authority for bus additions by \$6.4 million.

Prior to the strike, OC Transpo was targeting 104.5 million passenger trips in 2009. Due to the strike, city staff are now anticipated 17.5 million fewer passenger trips.

Combined with a slowing economy and the potential for additional temporary ridership loss, overall OC Transpo is now expecting only 80.1 million passenger trips in 2009.

This ridership loss is temporary and based on

strike experiences in other cities will take up to a year to rebound, according to the report.

Those 24.3 million fewer trips translate into a \$31.4-million loss of revenue, on top of what has already been lost through the free week and free weekends offered in February and the discounts for March passes.

The revenue loss could reach as high as \$38 million, if the city decides to postpone a proposed 7.5 per cent fare increase scheduled for April until June.

The city's transit committee will be considering that postponement Wednesday.

According to the staff report, the loss of revenue is balanced slightly by \$15.3 million in savings made up from unpaid wages during the strike, lower fuel consumption and depreciation of the transit fleet.

ShareYourViews

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Investors brace for another gloomy week amid rumour of U.S. bank nationalizations and sharp job losses at metronews.ca/canada

Video Environment Canada cautions not to put away the winter clothes just yet at metronews.ca/canada

Blogs Kenya Hunt reports from Milan Fashion Week, where boots are reaching for the thigh.



Lotteries KENO

Friday, Feb. 27

Lotto Super 7: 4, 19, 24, 25, 27, 33 & 34 Bonus 32

Saturday, Feb. 28

Lotto 6/49: 2, 8, 26, 46, 48 & 49 Bonus 34

Sunday, March 1

Ontario Pick 3: 5 6 8; Ontario Pick 4: 9 2 3 8

Encore: 4259991;

Daily Keno: 3, 11, 21, 23, 26, 35, 36, 38, 43, 44

46, 49, 51, 54, 61, 63, 65, 68, 69, 70

These results are not official.



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Two Carleton students awarded bursary

Two second-year Carleton University students, English student Kristin Williams, and psychology student Nicole Murphy, both with cerebral palsy, have been awarded Nicholas Leroux Memorial Bursary for students with disabilities, the university announced. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Eat a waffle for Norway

Family fun at Norway Day

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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and represent his charity, Right to Play, which he operates out of Toronto.

"The Norwegian government and the Canadian Government are big supporters of Right to Play," he said. "This is the perfect chance to thank them and be part of this to celebrate a winter festival in Ottawa and raise some money for Right to Play."

In the past, cross-country skiers and Norway enthusiasts had to ski several kilometres to the Huron Shelter in the Gatineau Hills to partake in the annual Norway Day festivities, which include free Norwegian-style waffles and hot blackcurrent toddies.

This year, however, Norway Day moved to Gatineau Park's Relais Plein Air to provide easier access.

"For the bribery of a waffle, it's amazing how far the kids will ski," said Mike Leach, whose family and two others have attended Norway Day since it started in 2002. The three families have six young children.

"We would all get together as families and everyone skied together — all the kids go and the adults go," Lori Meyers said.

"We've met the ambassador a few times, which is fantastic and any cross-country skier dreams of someday skiing in Norway."

"And the waffles are amazing," Leach said. "You think better of Norway for sure. Waffles go a long way for world harmony, I think."

Norwegian Ambassador Tor Berntin Næss said the new location made it easier for more people to attend. Even when the event took place at Huron Shelter they still had about 1,500 visitors.

"We'll see what happens. Maybe next year we'll be back at Huron," he said. "We're just trying to do something popular. Skiing is very popular in Norway and it's popular here."

This year, Johann Olav Koss, the four-time Norwegian Olympic gold medalist in speedskating, joined the ambassador to greet guests in the park,

It's amazing the lengths to which some people will go for free Norwegian "vaffles" and warm "solbær" toddy.

"The Norwegian government and the Canadian Government are big supporters of Right to Play," he said. "This is the perfect chance to thank them and be part of this to celebrate a winter festival in Ottawa and raise some money for Right to Play."

City crews blasting towards spring

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RIVER Those little explosions thundering through neighbourhoods near the Rideau River are one of the first signs of spring.

They were made by city crews breaking up the ice on the river with explosives to avoid flooding when it thaws.

"This is done every year, for 100 years now," explained Chuck Wheatley, zone supervisor for the Rideau River Flood Control.

If they left the ice to melt its own, he said,



City of Ottawa blast crews break up ice on the Rideau River near Stanley Avenue in New Edinburgh yesterday afternoon.

"there is a good chance that parts of the city would flood — all the low-lying areas nearby."

If the ice break-up wasn't controlled it could

get caught near one of the bridges, like a dam, and cause the river to back up and flood.

Crews started blasting at the Rideau Falls around 7 a.m. on Saturday and continued through to Sunday, making it halfway to St. Patrick Street bridge before an ice jam near the Rideau Falls forced them to shut down for the day.

Sometime today an ice-breaking machine will take over and break ice the rest of the way along the river through the city. Wheatley said the machine is like a barge with a backhoe that breaks the ice as it pulls itself along.

Ottawa

oc Transpo

All Routes Return March 16



Full Service Off-peak

During off-peak hours—early morning, mid-day, evenings and weekends—all routes that normally operate during these time periods are running.

March Break, March 16-20

During March Break, school routes will not operate. This does not affect service to post-secondary schools.

Schedules and Travel Planning

For automated schedule information, call **613-560-1000** plus your 4-digit bus stop number. For travel planning, schedules and more, call **613-741-4390** or visit octranspo.com.

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All bus routes will be back in service starting **Monday, March 16**—three weeks ahead of schedule. Although all routes will be running, some will have fewer trips than normally scheduled during peak periods since bus availability will be at just 90%. By running at least some trips on all routes, all communities will have service back in place and there will be more transit choices for customers.

Throughout March and April, additional trips will be added to routes as more buses become available. Customers should check online regularly for updated trip times.

Leading up to March 16, there will be a gradual reintroduction of additional rush hour service. Routes **38, 60, 76, 121, 125** and **131** returned on **February 25**, and on **March 2**, Express routes **33** and **35** will be added. More routes are expected to return on Monday, March 9. Please check our web site for up-to-date information.

Fare News

Normal fares resumed March 1.

However, seniors who are 65 or older continue to ride free on Wednesdays all year.

December pass holders can use their pass to get a 60% discount on their March pass. December EXPRESS pass holders will also receive discounts for April and May.

ECOPASS Reminder

If you have an expired ECOPASS, don't forget to renew it at an OC Transpo Sales Centre no later than April 30.

New Bus Tickets



Green bus tickets have been replaced with new bright pink tickets. The new tickets are larger and

printed on a thinner paper, which is designed to work better with the new fareboxes and reduce jams. Although the price isn't printed on the ticket, they are still \$1 each. However, instead of selling in 10-packs, tickets are available in six-packs for \$6.

Canada



A program unique in Canada is pairing elementary school kids with therapy dogs from St. John's Ambulance and bringing them all together at the Winnipeg Humane Society. It's called See Spot Read. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Russia denies airspace approach

Russia is denying that one of its aircraft approached Canadian airspace three days before U.S. President Barack Obama visited Ottawa on Feb 19. Defence Minister Peter MacKay said Friday that Canadian CF-18 fighter jets at Cold Lake, Alta., scrambled to intercept the plane on Feb. 16 after North American Aerospace Defence Command (Norad) detected the Russian Bear long-range bomber headed for Canada.

CBC NEWS ONLINE

City recycling programs feeling economic pinch

Riding the Recession

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SERVICES In a recession, there are lots of differences that people will notice. But the effect of changing economic times on a city's recycling program is not one of them.

But while residents won't see a change to recycling programs, cities across Canada will definitely notice a difference, said Albert Shamess, director of solid waste services for the City of Ottawa.

"The issue for us and for all cities is the reduction in revenue for recyclables," Shamess said.

Ottawa collects recyclable materials — paper, plastic, aluminum, glass, steel and cardboard — and sells them, with proceeds to go towards running the recycling program.

During a recession, these items go for less money on a worldwide market, Shamess said.

"What happens is the revenue drops, and the city has to cover more through taxes."

Up until October 2008, revenue for recyclables was at a record high, Shamess said.

By The Numbers

- In 2008, Ottawa got \$7 million in revenue for recyclables through its residential recycling program. By the end of 2009, City of Ottawa's Albert Shamess said he expects the city will fall at least \$2 million short of that.

The price dropped through October and November.

Similarly in Toronto, the city's monthly recycling revenue for the sale of curbside materials is approximately one million to date in 2009. In 2007 and 2008, the monthly revenue was roughly \$2 million.

"While we cannot predict what the prices for marketable recyclables will be by December 2009, we are optimistic that recycling revenues will improve from today's levels as the year passes," said Pat Barrett, a spokesperson for the City of Toronto.

"Now that the value of recycling materials has decreased, we're seeing less revenue coming in," said Chris Underwood, a solid waste management engineer with the City of Vancouver.

"Based on what I know about the economy, the outlook doesn't look very good for the rest of the year but it's unknown."

— WITH FILES FROM

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Veil ruling challenged

HR Commission argues religious freedom in court case

Ontario courts have a duty to accommodate religious beliefs, and that means a Toronto woman who wants to testify while wearing her niqab — a veil covering everything except her eyes — must be allowed to do so, the Ontario Human Rights Commission says.

And it will seek to make that argument today in the courtroom of an Ontario Court judge who has already ordered the woman to testify without the veil, which she says she wears for religious reasons.

The commission, which is seeking leave to inter-

vene in a sexual assault trial before Mr. Justice Norris Weisman, says the judge erred in law when he ordered the woman, a witness in a sexual assault trial, to doff her veil.

The commission argues Weisman's ruling should be overturned since "the court had a duty to accommodate ... religious beliefs and failed, both procedurally and substantively, to do so," according to an affidavit filed with Superior Court and signed by commissioner Barbara Hall.

The commission also wants to explain "the current state of the law in re-

spect of the duty to accommodate religious beliefs and practices," the affidavit adds, "and to explain how the Honourable Mr. Justice Weisman's ruling is inconsistent with the current state of the law."

The woman's identity and any evidence related to the case are protected by a publication ban.

The case, a collision of two rights, pits religious freedom against the right of a defendant to face an accused in open court. And it's being watched closely across Canada, home to some 580,000 Muslims, amid fears about

Muslim women coming forward in criminal cases.

The woman's lawyer, David Butt, was scheduled to begin arguments today on why the Ontario Court Justice ruling should be overturned by a higher court. Weisman made his ruling at the outset of a preliminary hearing, which is now on hold.

When the complainant indicated last fall she wanted to wear her veil while testifying, defence counsel told the judge that assessing her demeanour was of "critical importance" when tailoring questioning.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Skin to stem: Scientists make gains in cell research

SCIENCE Researchers from Canada and Britain said yesterday they had found a safer way to transform ordinary skin cells into powerful stem cells in a move that could eventually remove the need to use human embryos.

It is the first time that scientists have turned skin cells into induced pluripotent stem cells or iPS cells — which look and act like embryonic stem cells — without having to use viruses in the process.

The new method also allows for genes that are inserted to trigger cell reprogramming to be removed afterwards. Stem cells are the body's master cells, producing all the body's tissues and organs. **REUTERS**



Scientist Dr. Andras Nagy of Mount Sinai hospital led a Toronto study in conjunction with a British team that was part of a breakthrough in stem cell research.

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News in brief

TASER INQUIRY The RCMP constable who fired a Taser at Robert Dziekanski, the Polish man who died on the floor of Vancouver's airport in 2007, is set to give his version of events today. Const. Kwesi Millington is scheduled to begin testimony today at the inquiry into Dziekanski's death.

IMMIGRATION A scathing Federal Court verdict calls a visa officer in Pakistan close-minded and incompetent for an "indefensible" decision that stopped a Toronto women's organization from bringing a widow and her three children here from Kabul.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Green party Leader Elizabeth May goes over her papers in the foyer of the House of Commons after the Federal Budget was released on Parliament Hill in this January file photo. The party is mulling over how it can attract more Quebec voters as it holds its upcoming policy convention.

Greens 'stumped'

Party ponders strategy for Quebec voters

A high-profile Green candidate blames the cultural mindset of Quebec voters as a major reason his party has struggled to break in to the province.

"My principal thought about Quebec right now is that it's got me stumped," said Green Party of Canada deputy leader Claude William Genest in an interview at the biennial policy convention in northern Nova Scotia this weekend.

The Greens earned their highest vote share in Canadian history in the last federal election — earning 6.8 per cent of the vote across the country — but struggled in Quebec where they managed to convince just 3.5 per cent of voters.

Rather than attribute the poor showing to the Bloc Québécois taking up most of the left-wing space in the province — Genest said it was more about the Greens having yet to appeal to what he called the emotional character of Quebecers.

"The rest of Canada — English-Canada — responds to rational, logical arguments," he added.

"Quebec is all about emotion. I think there has to be a connection happening in Quebec on an emotional level."

"That continues to be a mystery to me."

Genest was the Quebec face of the Green party, appearing in French-language television ads during the

last federal election.

The PBS television show host and professor at the University of Vermont ran in the Montreal riding of Westmount-Ville Marie and placed fifth with seven per cent of the vote.

Jessica Gal, who ran for the Greens in the neighbouring riding of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine in 2004 and 2008, said the party has a lot of work to do.

"We've got a lot of catching up there and that has probably to do with, as usual, the different political-cultural situation," she said, adding there were often problems with poorly translated campaign materials during the election.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tory gears up for riding byelection

POLITICS Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader John Tory is fighting for his political life in Thursday's byelection in Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes Brock. Tory candidly acknowledges — as he has to rival candidates — that a loss in this byelection could bring his political career to an abrupt end despite optimism in his party that the growing recession boosts the odds of ousting the Liberals in the 2011 provincial election.

"There's a lot at stake," says Tory, citing his business experience and work ethic as reasons locals should vote for him.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Drinking moms-to-be cost \$5B, report says

HEALTH The damage caused by expectant mothers who drink during pregnancy is costing Canada more than \$5 billion a year, says a new report.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder impacts one in 100 children, or almost 243,000 Canadians, causing low birth weight, restricted growth, physical and mental disability and, in some cases, heart problems.

Doctors dealing with FASD say there is a dire need for more diagnostic services and warn that even with government intervention, FASD will carry

a high price tag for generations.

"We all know one drink is not going to cause FASD," says Dr. Brenda Stade, the lead of the FASD clinic at Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital. Stade co-wrote the paper, which was published in the Canadian Journal of Clinical Pharmacology.

"Bottom line, you should abstain if you can. If you can't, you should go to your family doctor and try to cut down."

No one knows exactly how much alcohol can cause FASD.

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World



Egyptian tomb rediscovered

Belgian archaeologists have rediscovered an ancient Egyptian tomb that had been lost for decades, Egyptian Culture Minister Farouk Hosni said yesterday. In 1880, Swedish Egyptologist Karl Piehl uncovered the tomb of Amenhotep, the deputy seal-bearer of the pharaoh Thutmose III, in the city of Luxor, about 600 kilometres to the south of Cairo. It later disappeared under the desert sand.

REUTERS

Bangladeshi mutineers to be tried

Special tribunals will try Bangladeshi paramilitary mutineers who killed at least 80 people, mostly army officers, in an uprising last week, government and military officials said yesterday.

More than 70 potential victims are still missing after the mutiny by members of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) border guards, which broke out on Wednesday, officials said.

The bodies of officers, and some family members, have been found in mass graves within the BDR compound in Dhaka and in sewers and canals. The mutiny, over pay and command structure, spread to about a dozen smaller towns across Bangladesh. Witnesses said about 1,000 BDR troops who had fled their headquarters af-

"We will punish the killers and their mentors after a proper investigation and fair trial." Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

ter the two-day mutiny had returned and were having their identities checked outside the complex. But thousands remain at large, police said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told parliament

yesterday she had ordered police, the army and the elite Rapid Action Battalion to fan out across the country to capture mutineers, and seize any weapons they had.

Police said they had

identified up to 1,000 BDR members as suspects, and some could be charged with murder.

Government minister Syed Ashraful Islam said the decision to set up the tribunals was made at a cabinet meeting led by Hasina on Saturday. No details about the tribunals were released.

An investigation led by Home Minister Shahara

Khatun has been told to hand down its first findings within a week.

"We will punish the killers and their mentors after a proper investigation and fair trial," Hasina said yesterday.

"We will also seek assistance from Scotland Yard and co-operation from the United Nations to probe the mutiny."

REUTERS

Pro-Kremlin party claims wide support

ELECTION Russia's ruling party, facing its first major electoral test amidst the economic crisis, claimed strong support in local elections yesterday but the opposition Communists and nationalists complained of cheating.

Few official results were available yesterday but United Russia chairman Boris Gryzlov told local media his party "was showing high results" in all nine regions holding elections for regional and municipal legislatures.

Opposition parties denounced the Kremlin for what they said was an un-

Russia hit hard

- Millions have lost their jobs, prices have risen and the ruble has slumped against the dollar since the economic crisis hit Russia late last year, ending the 10-year boom that had underpinned support for Putin and Medvedev.

usually high level of dirty tricks in the campaign preceding yesterday's polls, when 20 million Russians were eligible to vote.

Communist Party Central Committee chairman Pyotr Romanov said United

Russia's behaviour in the western region of Bryansk bordering Belarus suggested foul play on a grand scale.

Romanov cited protocols from five polling stations in Bryansk's central Oktyabr district, which he said showed the Communist Party "trounced" United Russia. First official results in the same place gave the Communists only 15 per cent.

Central Election Commission chief Vladimir Churov, an old contemporary of Putin's, said he had not received reports of any violations.

REUTERS

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Armenia Calls for an early election



Opposition supporters shout slogans during a rally in central Yerevan yesterday. At least 10,000 anti-government protesters in Armenia yesterday demanded early elections to mark one year since deadly clashes between police and opposition activists in the former Soviet republic.

Mexico's drug war bleeds over into U.S.

VIOLENCE Authorities are fearing that violent crime is beginning to bleed over into the United States from Mexico, where drug cartel abductions and executions are a daily feature of a raging drug war that claimed 6,000 lives last year.

Execution-style murders, violent home invasions and a spiralling kidnap rate in Phoenix, Ariz. — where police reported an average of one abduction a

Background

- The death toll has soared in Mexico since President Felipe Calderon took office in 2006 and sent tens of thousands of troops to fight cocaine cartels.

day last year linked to Mexican crime — have all been observed.

While U.S. authorities stress they have not seen

anything like the kind of street battles and horrific beheadings that are now common in Mexico, they are already taking action to curb what has become known as "overspill."

Washington has stepped up its support, pledging to give Mexico helicopters, surveillance aircraft, inspection equipment and police training under a \$1.4-billion US plan to beat the cartels.

REUTERS

News in brief

MIDDLE EAST U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in the Middle East yesterday, delving into Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking for the first time at an international donors conference for Gaza. The United

States is expected to pledge more than \$900 million US.

OBAMA U.S. President Barack Obama will visit Prague on April 5, the Czech Prime Minister said yesterday.

BIRD FLU Scientists in Hong Kong and the U.S. have developed an experimental H5N1 bird flu vaccine for people by piggybacking it on the well-tested and highly successful smallpox vaccine.

REUTERS

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Comment

Good manners matter

Keeping up with the latest in proper recession etiquette



Even in these times of financial restraint, there are still some things we don't have to do without. I don't mean having fun or believing the reason corporate CEOs make millions a year is because they know what they're doing. That's all over. What we still have, even when the world is going to hell in a handbag — and definitely not a Prada — is the chance to behave like civilized human beings.

Good manners matter.

They're what separate us from the animals. That, and being able to get credit cards. But keeping up on the newest recession etiquette can be a challenge. How many of us lately have lain awake the night before an important dinner party wondering, "Which fork do I provide for the Spam course?" or "Is it rude to use the phrase 'disposable income'?"

Help is at hand. Here's answers to your most commonly asked recession-eti-quette questions:

Dear Anne: I'm having dinner with a former wine snob who has fallen on hard times. What should I say?

Answer: *"What interesting wine 2008 was certainly an excellent year for grapes in Moosanee." Or "It's wonderful how you're trying to conserve cork trees by buying wine in those big plastic jugs."*

Dear Anne: I have a vacation planned at an expensive hotel. Is there some way I can get out of tipping the maid?

A: *Sleep on the floor and shower in the lobby fountain.*

Dear Anne: My fiancé thinks we should scale down the lavish wedding I planned before the economy tanked, but I say, "You only get married once ... or two or three times, tops." Is there a way to throw a low-cost reception

that will still have our guests talking?

A: *Pass out KFC snack packs in the church parking lot. Believe me, they'll talk.*

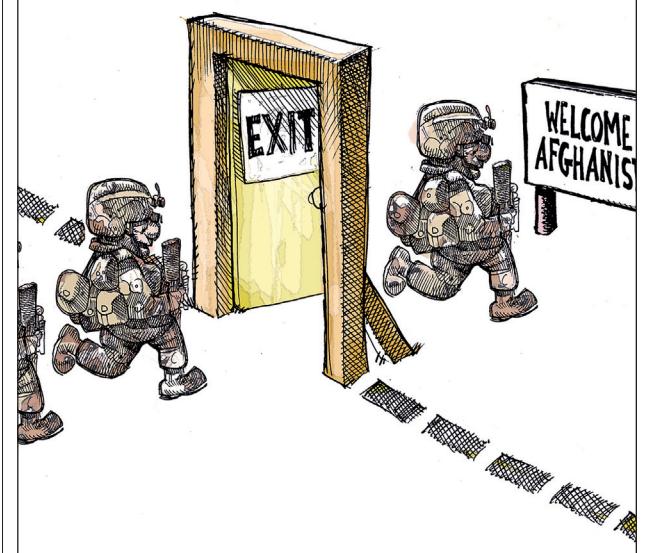
Dear Anne: I'm starting my first job and the dress code is "no jeans." I can't afford new clothes. What should I do?

A: *This is your chance to be both creative and a stand out. Go through your closet and review what clothes fit this code. For instance, "no jeans" does not mean no leftover prom dress, wet suit or long underwear.*

Having good manners will help us weather this recession with élan. And, what's even better? They're absolutely free.

Anne Hines is an author and humour writer. She has written three novels and one collection of nonfiction humour.

IRAQ EXIT STRATEGY:



Worth mentioning

Success story with a twist

HEALTH Cody was dying of lymphoma and would probably not have made it to his eighth birthday had his family not taken him to one of the only hospitals that offers the bone marrow transplant he needed.

Two weeks after being admitted, Cody's doctors say the procedure was a success. He is hopefully cancer-free for the rest of his life. It's a success story with a twist — Cody is a Golden Retriever.

Dr. Steven Suter, an assistant professor of oncology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at North Carolina State University, took a well established protocol for humans and applied it to dogs.

Suter says lymphoma is one of the most common cancers in dogs and while chemotherapy

will extend a dog's life for a couple of years, in the end 98 per cent of patients succumb to the cancer.

His answer: Cure the dog using the same methods that would be applied to a human with lymphoma.

The procedure involves a leukapheresis machine, a system designed to harvest stem cells from the patient's blood, in conjunction with a drug therapy that helps extract stem cells from bone marrow.

A bone marrow transplant for a dog costs \$15,000.

Suter explains that the cost is high because the drugs and protocols used are the same as in humans, but he argues that compared to other options, it may well be the best one.

REUTERS

Metro Online Poll Results

25%
SAID YES

Will tougher laws be enough to reduce gang crime?

Weigh in on today's question at metronews.ca

75%
SAID NO



Wash your hands, stop worrying, enjoy life



I used to pride myself on not being a germaphobe. Then I started using OC Transpo buses in winter.

Growing up in England, my parents instilled in me a good old-fashioned "bit of dirt will do you good" attitude to exploring the world around me. Sure, I was taught to wash my hands after playing in the garden, and to cover my mouth when sneezing. But it never occurred to me that public transit could be the source of a nasty array of infectious diseases.

My wake-up call came not on the London Under-

ground or Toronto subway, but one chilly December day at Somerset and Preston. I stood waiting for the 2 with a man who smoked a cigarette, then coughed generous quantities of mucus into his hands. When he got on the bus, he wiped his hands all over one of the poles. I started wearing gloves.

Now nursing student Jenn St. Jean has started a Facebook campaign to get hand sanitizers installed on OC Transpo buses. Her campaign page states, "the risk of transmitting and/or acquiring an infection is very high. One way to cut the risk is by implementing one hand sanitizer on OC Transpo buses. Malls and businesses have hand sanitizers dispersed around the building, why not the buses?"

Despite my encounter with the coughing man,

The world is divided into those who understand personal hygiene, and those who don't.

the idea does not appeal to me. The world is divided into those who understand personal hygiene, and those who don't. It's going to take more than a few hand sanitizers to convince those who don't to stop bringing their nasty habits onto the buses.

There's also a difference between good hygiene and paranoia. I once saw a parent on a bus tell her son, "don't touch anything. There are nasty people with germs." That's excessive. To me, exposing a child to several bouts of cold or flu is infinitely preferable to instilling in them a lifelong fear of the world around them. Perhaps it's a transatlantic cultural difference. In England, we don't have

drugstores the size of train stations, and manufacturers of cold medications don't sponsor "flu reports" on the TV weather.

While I'm now more conscious of public transit hygiene, and that's definitely a good thing, I'm trying not to become consumed by it. Last month, OC Transpo banned atheist ads stating, "there's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy life." I'd like to live by the philosophy: "Exposure to germs is necessary to build a healthy immune system. Wash your hands. And stop worrying and enjoy life."

John Holmes is a writer for various publications in Canada and the U.K. He's never had a driver's licence, and has relied on public transit all his adult life; ottawaletters@metronews.ca

It's your turn to tell others what you think. Email your thoughts and opinions to: ottawaletters@metronews.ca

Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number — street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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Thirty thousand people in Atlantic Canada are waiting for their Employment Insurance claim to be processed; 8,000 of them have already been waiting for longer than the 28-day mandated response time. Applications have been piling up since September as the number of people laid off increases. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Reprise for GM, Chrysler, report says

AUTOMOTIVE Canada's industry minister said the government is willing to negotiate an aid deal with General Motors Corp. and Chrysler past an end-of-March deadline, according to a media report.

The article, citing an interview with Industry Minister Tony Clement Friday, said the Canadian government has also looked at "Plan B" scenarios in the event one of the companies goes bankrupt.

It reported that Clement said there are signals the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama is willing to extend a March 31 deadline by which GM and Chrysler have to submit reports to the Treasury as a condition for government aid.

REUTERS

In brief

INSURANCE American International Group is close to a deal with the U.S. government that would ease the terms of its bailout, provide a further equity commitment and help it pay down debt, a person familiar with the matter said Saturday. The revised agreement is expected to include an additional \$30 billion US equity commitment.

REUTERS

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Merkel wants rules changed



EU rules that determine how much capital banks set aside to cover risk should be changed to make lending to the economy easier, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said yesterday. Critics of the Basel II rules say when a bank's assets become untradeable or fall in value due to plunging stock markets, banks are forced to top up their capital and have less cash for lending to the economy.

REUTERS

Rate cuts near end? Most dealers expect half-point reduction

The Bank of Canada looks set to deliver a hefty half-point interest rate cut tomorrow that should boost the loonie and bonds, but it may also signal its 15-month rate-cutting campaign is near an end.

The rate reduction is seen as a slam dunk by markets, with two-thirds of primary securities dealers forecasting a half-point easing that would take the interest rate to a record low of 0.5 per cent.

"The bank ... don't seem to be drinking the same pessimistic Kool-Aid that everybody else is drinking."

Doug Porter,
BMO Capital Markets

Regardless of the size of the cut, most dealers see it as the final rate change by the bank in 2009.

"The bank in their statements and comments has not seemed overly geared to cut further and don't seem to be drinking the same pessimistic Kool-Aid that everybody else is drinking at this point," said Doug Porter, deputy chief economist at BMO Capital Markets.

But given governor Mark Carney's propensity to surprise, forecasters are quite prepared to be wrong.

REUTERS

Russia Going soft on recession?



ALEXANDER NEMENOV/REUTERS

Women stand along a road as they sell giant soft toys, 120 kilometres east of Moscow yesterday. Unrest across Russia over economic upheaval has been muted, with the biggest protests so far taking place in the Far East port of Vladivostok where hundreds were arrested in January in demonstrations over car tax.

CTV predicts \$100-million loss

TELEVISION CTV expects to lose around \$100 million on its over-the-air TV operations this year, according to documents the broadcaster released on Friday.

The forecast follows a loss of \$13.3 million in 2008, reports CBC News Online.

In a memo to employees, CTV said its A-Channel television stations are in a "grave" financial situation because of lower advertising revenues and it will have to cut operating costs at the local networks in Ontario, B.C. and Nova Scotia.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Front page of today's Metro Moscow newspaper.

scene. It will also publish international news stories from Metro International.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Asian, European leaders reject protectionism

GLOBAL CRISIS European and Southeast Asian leaders yesterday rejected protectionism to safeguard their national interests against a global financial crisis, spelling out their blocs' commitments to co-ordinate policies.

The EU pledge came at a summit intended to bridge differences over how to fight recession and address

fears that some countries could take steps that undermine the EU commitment to a single market.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), holding a summit on the same day, endorsed fiscal stimulus, monetary easing, access to credit and trade financing, and measures to stimulate domestic demand.

REUTERS

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École d'art d'Ottawa - dates du printemps

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Patriots put faith in Brady's recovery, trade Cassel

Kansas City and New England finalized a major NFL trade on Saturday, a deal that will send quarterback Matt Cassel and linebacker Mike Vrabel to the Chiefs in exchange for a second-round pick in April's draft. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

EDITOR: JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Bowden resigns amid allegations

MLB Washington Nationals senior vice president and general manager Jim Bowden resigned from his position yesterday. No immediate replacement was named.

In a statement, Bowden said false allegations in the press compromised his "ability to properly represent the Washington Nationals." SI.com reported last week that Bowden was being looked at by a U.S. federal investigation into skimming signing bonuses of Latin American prospects.

"There have been no charges made, and there has been no indication that parties have found any wrongdoing on my part," Bowden said.

Two NFL players among missing

NFL Detroit Lions defensive end Corey Smith and Oakland Raiders linebacker Marquis Cooper were among four missing boaters off the coast of Florida, the U.S. Coast Guard said yesterday.

Smith and Cooper were on a boat that left Clearwater Pass Saturday for a fishing trip, but did not return as expected.

Ott suspended indefinitely

NHL The National Hockey League yesterday suspended Dallas Stars forward Steve Ott indefinitely, pending a hearing.

Ott was assessed a match penalty for intent-to-injure during an incident with Ducks forward Travis Moen at the end of Anaheim's win on Saturday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

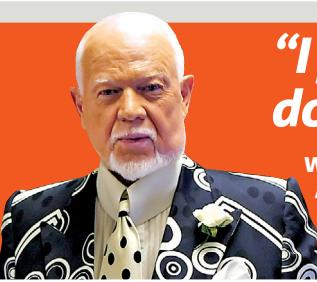
YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Chicago 4 Los Angeles 2
Florida 6 Washington 2
New Jersey 3 Philadelphia 0
Pittsburgh 4 Dallas 1
Tampa Bay at Calgary
Columbus at Vancouver

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Detroit 105 Boston 95
Houston 105 Minnesota 94
Indiana 100 Denver 94
New Orleans 99 New Jersey 96
Phoenix 118 L.A. Lakers 111
Portland 102 San Antonio 84
Cleveland at Atlanta
Utah at Golden State
Toronto at Dallas

On the web

For more sports coverage, visit us online at www.metronews.ca/sports



"I just thought he was wrong ... he doesn't know Alex like we know Alex"

Washington Capitals coach Bruce Boudreau on CBC's Don Cherry, left, who criticized Alex Ovechkin Saturday, saying the Caps' star's goal celebrations feature "goofy stuff" and suggesting that he will eventually take a big hit on the ice as a result.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

What's a number?

ANDREA WOO
for Metro Canada



Aleisha Cline, 38, will compete in the 2010 Games.

Aleisha Cline's response to the question of how she juggles being both a mother to two small children and an Olympic athlete isn't too surprising.

"Oh God," said the Calgary-born, Kelowna-raised ski cross champion with a laugh. "That's not easy. (I get) a lot of support from the family, because there's no way that I could do it otherwise."

Cline, who currently lives in Whistler with her husband and children, has inspired many by not only balancing the two, but by doing so at 38. In comparison, her youngest teammates on the Canadian ski cross team are only 19.

Online

- Keep up with Aleisha's season and progress on her blog at aleishacline.com.

"Hopefully I can be an inspiration and a role model to other women my age with a couple of kids," she said. "Most women out there think, 'Oh my god, I have two kids. My life is over.'"

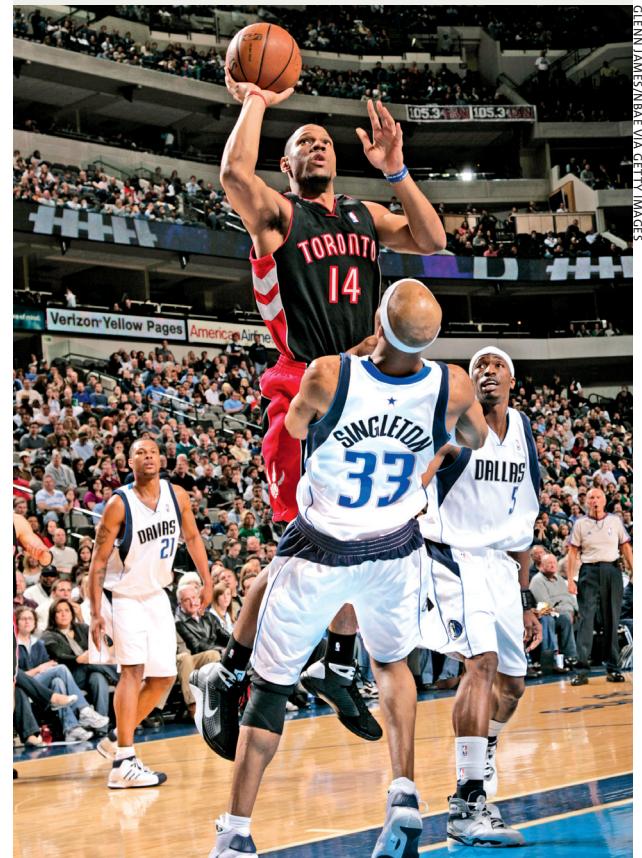
Cline has four gold medals, and one silver, from the X Games.

"Most women out there think, 'Oh my god, I have two kids. My life is over.'"
Aleisha Cline

On Feb. 6, she added another gold medal to her collection after coming in first at the World Cup competition at Cypress Mountain in West Vancouver, winning all four of her races while hometown friends cheered her on. Having acquired a taste for the precious yellow metal, she hopes to chomp her teeth into it once again at the 2010 Winter Games, when ski cross will be an Olympic sport for the first time.

"It's so neat to be able to ski and race and show my friends and family what I do when I'm gone," she said. "You can send emails and photos and tell them about the course, but you really don't get a good feel of it until you get to see it."

Raptors In Big D



Joey Graham of the Raptors puts up a runner over James Singleton of the Mavericks in Dallas last night. For a complete game recap, visit metronews.ca/sports.

Brodeur notches 100

NHL RESULT

Devils 3, Flyers 0

Avalanche standout Patrick Roy for the most all-time.

"It's hard to believe a little bit," Brodeur said of the accomplishment. "You go out and you play and you get shutouts. There's only one other guy that got to that 100 (shutouts) plateau, so it's kind of nice. It hit me later on when guys came over and congratulated me."

Jamie Langenbrunner, Johnny Oduya and Brian Gionta tallied the goals for

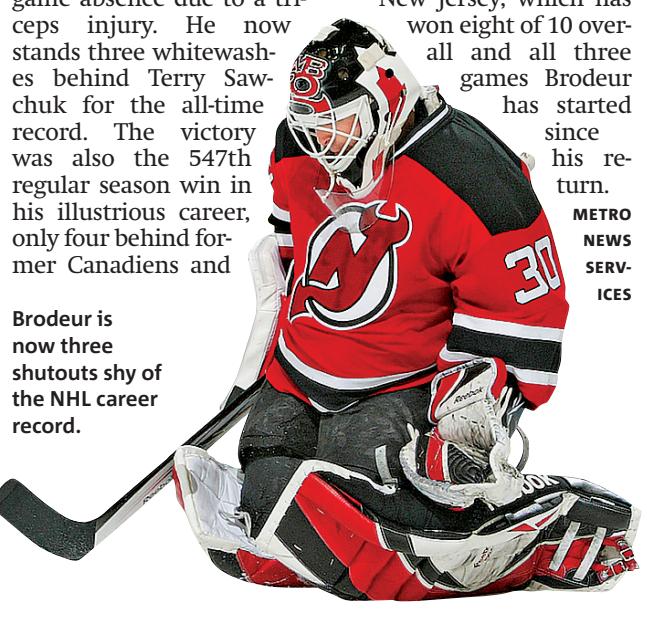
New Jersey, which has won eight of 10 overall and all three games Brodeur has started since his return.

METRO
NEWS
SERV-
ICES

HOCKEY Martin Brodeur registered 27 saves for his 100th career shutout, and the New Jersey Devils blanked the Philadelphia Flyers 3-0 yesterday in a key Atlantic Division battle.

Brodeur recorded his second shutout in three games since returning from a 50-game absence due to a triceps injury. He now stands three whitewashes behind Terry Sawchuk for the all-time record. The victory was also the 547th regular season win in his illustrious career, only four behind former Canadiens and

Brodeur is now three shutouts shy of the NHL career record.



Upset Sunday in the NBA

NBA RESULTS

Suns 118, Lakers 111

Matt Barnes pulled down 10 rebounds, handed out seven assists and scored 26 points, including a huge three-pointer and five free throws late in the fourth quarter, to help the Phoenix Suns record a 118-111 victory over the Western Conference-leading Los Angeles Lakers.

Playing without point guard Steve Nash (ankle) for the third-straight game, former Laker Shaquille O'Neal punched in another dominating effort, logging 33 points two days after a 45-point performance against Toronto.

Leandro Barbosa finished with 22 points and seven helpers, and Grant Hill added 17 points for the Suns, who have won two in a row since being embarrassed by the Lakers 132-106 on Thursday.

PISTONS 105, CELTICS 95

Richard Hamilton led a balanced Pistons attack, scoring 25 points and handing out nine assists,

RICK SCUTERI/REUTERS



Shaquille O'Neal shoots over the Lakers' Pau Gasol in Phoenix yesterday. O'Neal finished with 33 points in the Suns' win and has averaged 39 points in his last two games.

as Detroit handed the Boston Celtics a 105-95 defeat at TD Banknorth Garden.

Tayshaun Prince and Rasheed Wallace pulled down a combined 14 re-

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jimmy Fallon is taking over for Conan O'Brien as Late Night host tonight — and his new studio digs are going to be as green as possible. "Everything is recycled," he recently told The New York Post. "We are building everything with recycled metals and using all green lighting." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Going Green

EDITOR: MIKE.DEREZYCKY@METRONEWS.CA

The cost of using road salt

EarthTones

Sophia Dore & Andrew Laursen



ate winter is a dirty time of year in Canada. The snow is dirty, the roads are dirty and winter coats, boots and especially cars have a white film on them from the road salt.

We have used a lot of it this winter to keep us safe while driving and walking, however, eventually much of the salt we have been dumping on the roads and sidewalks will be washed into waterways. Other salt that is entrained in snowbanks will end up in soil by the sides of roads.

Salt in surface water can cause toxic effects to spawning or hatching fish, and can cause metals to become dissolved in water, which can have further toxic effects. Drinking water quality, whether from surface water or groundwater, can also be impacted. Salt washed into soil doesn't go anywhere and accumulates year after year, destroying soil structure and causing fewer plants to



A front-end loader carries a load of salt to a waiting truck in Toronto. Our Earth Tones columnists say it's time to find other alternatives to cheap rock salt during the winter.

grow in this soil and erosion to increase.

Salt by the side of roads lures animals to these "salt licks," which increases the likelihood that these animals will be hit by a car.

Now don't get us wrong, de-icing is necessary. A city can shut down for the odd severe snowstorm, but all activities cannot cease when we get a few centimetres of snow. There are, however, de-icing alternatives that should be considered for our roads.

The most commonly used road salt is rock salt, or sodium chloride, which is also the chemical that forms table salt. Alternatives to sodium chloride include magnesium chloride and calcium magnesium acetate. Magnesium chloride could cause less vegetation damage and less solubilization of metals in water than sodium chloride. It works at lower temperatures than rock salt and is commonly used in combination with rock salt when

it gets very cold. It is, however, about seven times more expensive than rock salt.

Calcium magnesium acetate has much fewer toxic effects than rock salt and is, to some extent, biodegradable. The calcium and magnesium would remain in soil but the acetate would degrade. Using this alternative would avoid toxicity caused by chloride ions. It could be spread in much the same way as rock salt although because of its par-

ticle size, it may be more likely to blow around. It does, however, take longer to melt ice than rock salt does and is roughly 20 times more expensive.

Various de-icing techniques can also reduce salt use. Anti-icing, or the preemptive spreading of salt before a snowfall, can result in the requirement for less salt per unit of road surface. Pre-wetting the salt, i.e., spraying on the roads as a solution rather than as a powder also results in the use of less salt. Sanding is another option, although it comes with its own set of environmental issues, and probably can't be used as the sole de-icer without a severe impact to the way we travel in the winter.

When it comes to keeping our roads safe in the winter without doing further harm to the environment the truth must be faced. We are going to need to pay more for de-icing. The use of cheap rock salt is going to have to be drastically reduced and one or more of these more expensive alternatives is going to have to be phased in. We cannot keep trading short-term cost for long-term cost.

Sophia Dore is an environmental scientist with Conestoga-Rovers & Associates. Andrew Laursen is an assistant professor at Ryerson University.



SMALL STEPS
David Suzuki
Turning your life green

Taking a bus can reduce pollutants

TRANSPORTATION If you drive to work, try riding the bus once this week.

A single bus takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and reduces air pollutants by nine tonnes a year.

Carpooling is another environmentally-friendly option. Find a carpooling partner and make a new friend.

For more information, see www.carpooltool.com/en/my/

DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

News in brief

EMISSIONS The United States should take the lead in reducing carbon emissions to be able to enlist China in the global campaign to curb global warming, an expert told an annual USDA conference Friday. The United States and China, the world's top two emitters of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels stoking global warming, have often been icy rivals over trade and security.

WATER Institutional investors are urging companies to measure, disclose and reduce their use of water to reduce long-term financial risks as supplies dry up from overuse and as higher temperatures melt glaciers away. "Companies need to be analyzing their water risk ... and to find ways to conserve water and minimize the opportunities for literally having their business shut down," said Mindy Lubber, the president of Ceres, a Boston-based coalition of investors.

REUTERS

Last chance to avoid fatal warming, EU warns

The world faces a final opportunity to agree on an adequate global response to climate change at a UN-led meeting in Copenhagen in December, the European Union's environment chief said Friday.

World leaders from about 190 countries meet

Aim of Copenhagen agreement

• EU environment commissioner Stavros Dimas said an agreement in Copenhagen should

in Copenhagen in December to try to agree on a global framework to re-

aim to limit global warming below the critical 2 C over pre-industrial times, or less than 1.2 C

place the Kyoto Protocol on fighting global warming, which expires in

above the current level, by at least halving global emissions by 2050 from 1990 levels.

2012.

"It is now 12 years since Kyoto was created. This

makes Copenhagen the world's last chance to stop climate change before it passes the point of no return," European Union environment commissioner Stavros Dimas told a climate conference in Budapest Friday.

REUTERS

Italy, Spain and Greece could bear brunt of warming: Study

IMPACT Italy, Spain and Greece could bear the brunt of climate change in Europe this century, with heat waves and wildfires hitting tourism earnings and food production, according to a draft report.

The economic impact of climate change could be \$7.9 billion US per year by

2020 if the EU's 27 nations do nothing to adapt, says a draft of the Adapting to Climate Change report.

The report did not specifically name Spain, Italy and Greece, but accompanying maps showed heavy impacts on crop yields and availability of fresh water in all three countries.

REUTERS

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Metro Workology exclusive: Matters of the Heart

Don't miss *Matters of the Heart*, Metro's exclusive feature series in the Workology section. There are jobs to be had that focus on falling in love, falling out of love and everything in between; we will be digging up the stories for you, so check Metronews.ca/work for the series.

Podcasts up grades?

New research from the State University of New York in Fredonia concluded that students who download a podcast lecture earn substantially higher test results than those who attend a large lecture in person.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

From gut feelings to a career

OddJobs

Diane Peters

metronews.ca/oddjobs

Years ago, when Lynda Doyle was young and had recently learned to drive, she came to a red light that just would not change. It was late and there was no one around. She was tempted to drive through, but a gut feeling told her to wait.

Suddenly, a car came flying through the intersection. If she'd ignored the light, it would have hit her. When the light did change, she followed her



Lynda Doyle knew from a young age that she had a sixth sense for things.

instincts again and turned. A few minutes later, she came across an ac-

cident caused by the car, and was able to help by calling the police and ambulance.

"I've always been able to trust my sixth sense; my gut feeling, I was raised that way," says Doyle, who's now 51.

The London, Ont., native was partially raised by her grandmother, who was considered a seer, and taught Doyle all she knew. But Doyle kept her gift from friends, and had no plans to make it part of her career.

She became a nurse, which she loved, but visions of her patients' futures sometimes barged into her mind. She pushed them aside. She got married and had a daughter, worked as a funeral director and then went back to school to study sociology and criminology.

Gradually, she allowed her intuition to come back into her life. She continued studying — she did a masters in women's studies and spirituality and then a PhD in meta-

"I've always been able to trust my sixth sense; my gut feeling, I was raised that way."

Lynda Doyle

physics — and starting doing spiritual counselling part time.

Now, 30 years later, she's an ordained spiritualist, Reiki master and medium. She speaks to large groups, runs courses (one's called *Psychic 101*), and does private sessions either face-to-face, on the phone or via web cam.

Before a private session, Doyle takes 15 minutes to meditate; completely clearing her mind and focusing on her client.

In the session, she'll use tarot cards or a tool called an angel rod, if the clients wants, but she prefers just holding the person's hand and tapping into his or her energy. She starts talking about the person's health, then work, education, finances and personal life. If a client wants a reading on someone who's alive or dead, all Doyle needs is a picture and the person's birthday.

While Doyle loves her work and her clients — some of whom have been seeing her for three decades — it's not easy to get glimpses into what's really going on and the future. As a result, she avoids watching the news and has to cleanse her mind after a reading.

"It doesn't stop on a dime."

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The Lowdown

Job title: Psychic/spiritualist
Salary: \$65 to \$85 a session
Education/training: Mentoring from another seer, extra study in spiritualism

Best part of the job: "When you look at a person's face and know they have some hope, that you've touched them in some way."

Worst part of the job: "The sad stories. It's a huge responsibility. Many times people don't admit they have a problem."

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

Ed McMahon has been hospitalized with pneumonia for nearly a month and is in serious condition. "He's getting great care and he's a fighter," Howard Bragman, a longtime friend to the 85-year-old Tonight Show announcer, told TVGuide.com. TVGUIDE.COM

Entertainment

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Box office

Weekend ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theatres, according to estimates:

1 **Madea Goes to Jail:** \$16.5 million US

2 **Jonas Brother 3-D:** \$12.7 million

3 **Slumdog Millionaire:** \$12.2 million

4 **Taken:** \$10 million

5 **He's Just Not That Into You:** \$5.9 million

6 **Paul Blart: Mall Cop:** \$5.6 million

7 **Coraline:** \$5.3 million

8 **Street Fighter:** \$4.7 million

9 **Confessions of a Shopaholic:** \$4.5 million

10 **Fired Up:** \$3.8 million

REUTERS

A graphic adaptation

Director Zack Snyder brings Watchmen to the big screen

CHRIS ALEXANDER
for Metro Canada

Zack Snyder is no stranger to controversy. The slick, visionary director wet his beak in the medium of music videos before raising universal horror geek ire when he chose, as his first feature, a remake of the epic cult classic zombie film Dawn of the Dead.

But he emerged from that experience relatively unscathed — with his fresh, breathlessly-paced thriller being embraced by both mainstream critics and hardcore genre buffs alike.

Now, after tackling graphic novel greatness with the thundering 300, Snyder is poised to unleash his most high stakes and potentially controversial effort yet: A gigantic — and mostly faithful — rendering of Alan Moore's celebrated anti-superhero allegory Watchmen.

Opening Friday, it's a picture that at first appears to be another comic book film but is, in reality, light years removed from Spider-Man.

"I didn't want to make a PG-13 version of a superhero movie," says Snyder, "I wanted it to go all the



Zack Snyder, left, directs actor Robert Wisden, who plays Richard Nixon, in Watchmen.

way with violence, sex and fight scenes, in the opposite way than X-Men or Fantastic Four would go.

"This is a hard movie on every level, without question, and people who go in to the theatre expecting a film like X-Men are going to get punched in the face."

For more than 20 years, filmmakers of every persuasion have attempted to bring Moore's layered,

complex and relentlessly nihilistic story of faded costume heroes and their varying levels of psychosis to the screen. But Snyder has used Moore's revered source material to fully expand his developing sense of visual-based cinema, sculpting some of the most dynamic and potent imagery ever committed to pulp fiction filmmaking in the process.

"I love tone and self-re-

flection" Snyder says about his creative leanings. "That's what I'm all about. Paul Verhoeven's Robocop is one of my favorite movies because you can either interpret it as a movie about a robot policeman who kicks ass or as an anti-technology film about man losing touch with his place in the universe.

"So it's that kind of dual dynamic that I hope I've achieved with Watchmen."

Hudson calls music therapy

PEOPLE Singer Jennifer Hudson told chat show host Oprah Winfrey on Friday that music is her "therapy" after the murders of three of her relatives last year.

Hudson and Winfrey did not mention the October killings during the singer's television appearance, but when asked how she was doing Hudson said she is "really good."

"I'm just glad to be back and be back to work again," said Hudson, 27. "Just doing what I love to do is like therapy." REUTERS

Chun-Li a half-baked spinoff

Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li

Director: Andrzej Bartkowiak
Stars: Kristin Kreuk, Chris Klein, Neil McDonough
Classification: 14A
Rating:

IAN GORMELY
for Metro Canada

Twenty years ago when a big blockbuster movie came out, they made half-baked video game adaptations to promote its release.

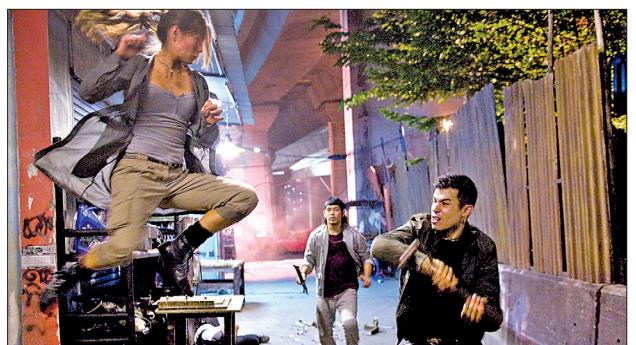
Oh how the tables have

turned. These days half-baked films are spat out to promote the games — Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li, which was released a week after the unveiling of the latest installment of the one-on-one fighting game series.

The Legend of Chun-Li is the second film spun-off from these games. It provides a back story for the game's long running female character (the one that does the spinning helicopter kick) dropping her into a typical martial arts revenge flick painfully unaware of its convoluted

and clichéd plot.

As a young girl, Chun-Li witnessed her father's kidnapping by nefarious developer Bison (Neil McDonough) and his henchman Balrog (Michael Clarke Duncan). Fast forward a decade, and Chun Li, now an adult played by Smallville's Kristin Kreuk, receives a mysterious scroll, which leads her to Bangkok. There she meets Gen, Bison's childhood friend, who teaches her martial arts to extract her revenge and stop Bison from redeveloping the Bangkok slums into condos.

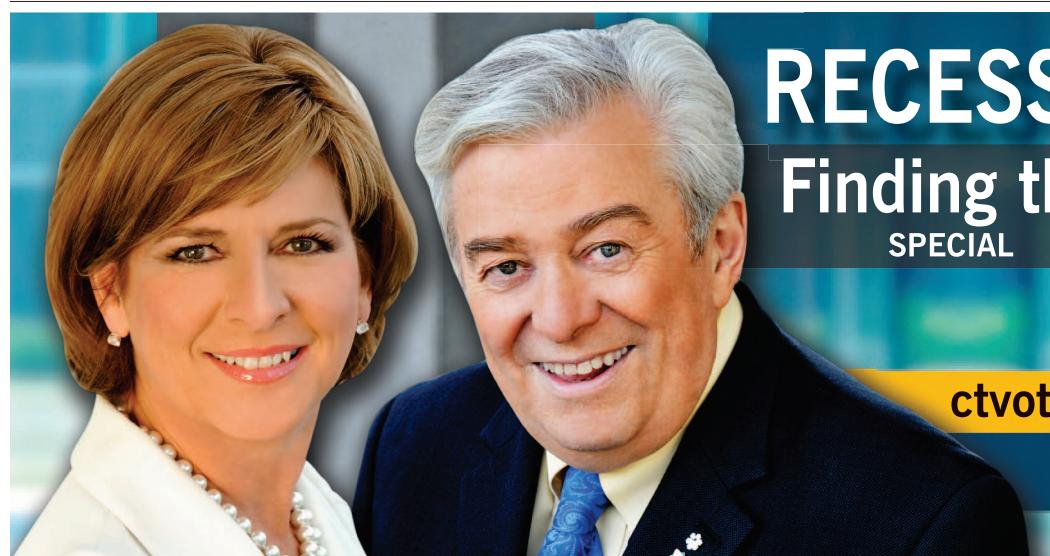


Kristin Kreuk, left, plays the titical character bent on avenging her kidnapped father in Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li.

No one expects high art from a film based on a video game, but it should at least be fun. And that's The Legend of Chun-Li's downfall. The dud of a script leads to some seri-

ously stiff acting from a talented ensemble.

A film like Street Fighter should focus on fighting and action, but what little it has is uninspired and just boring.



RECESSION OPPORTUNITIES

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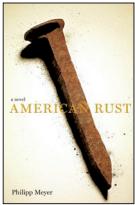
OTTAWA'S NEWS LEADER

Alexis the intern

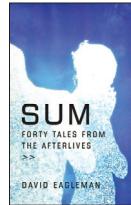
Alexis Bledel is set to guest-star on the two-hour series finale of *ER*. Bledel, who starred in the *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* movies and played daughter Rory for seven seasons on TV cult favorite *Gilmore Girls*, will scrub in as new intern Dr. Julia Wise. METRO NEWS SERVICES



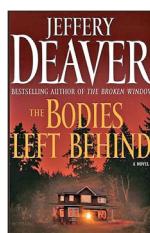
Young men on the run

**American Rust**

Author: Philipp Meyer
Publisher: Random House
Price: \$27.95 (Hardcover)

**Sum: Forty Tales from the Afterlives**

Author: David Eagleman
Publisher: Viking Canada
Price: \$26 (Hardcover)

**The Bodies Left Behind**

Author: Jeffery Deaver
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Price: \$29.99 (Hardcover)

BookPicks

Isaac English has little reason to remain in Buell, Pennsylvania. The dwindling steel town has been wounded by economic ruin. And for English, that devastation matches the personal plights of his mother's suicide and sister's getaway to Yale. But when English himself tries to evade Buell for California with high school chum Billy Poe, a drifter thwarts their plans. When the stranger tries to rob Poe, English accidentally kills the man. The dark turn propels the plot of *American Rust*, as the pair tries to shirk fault for the crime and English continues his quest for escape.

BRIAN COULTON/FOR METRO CANADA

Sketch may be da Vinci portrait

ARTISTS A sketch obscured by handwriting for five centuries in one of Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks may be a youthful self-portrait, according to Italian experts who "aged" the sketch to compare to confirmed later self-portraits.

Hidden under layers of thick writing on a page of the "Codex on the Flight of Birds," the sketch was spotted by the Italian scientific journalist Piero Angela. Leonardo expert Carlo Pedretti at California University described the sketch as "one of the most important acquisitions in the study of Leonardo, in the study of his image, and in the study of his thought too."

REUTERS

GlobalStyle**Kenya Hunt**

Read Milan Fashion Week reviews, exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

See complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and purchase tickets at metronews.ca/movies

prime time

OT	Vu	Sc	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	
3/29/09	265	353	2	TVO	Time Team "Early Bath" (N)	The Agenda With Steve Paikin	Midsomer Murders	Auschwitz:Nazi-Final Solution	Agenda-Paikin				
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	24 "Day 7: 6:00PM - 7:00PM; Day 7: 7:00PM - 8:00PM"	Heroes "Exposed" (N)	News (N)				
	-	-	5	SRC	Virginie (SC)	Les Parent	L'Auberge du chien noir (SC)	Les Boys (SC)	Tout sur moi	Le Téléjournal et Les Nou	La Zone		
	209	342	6	CHRO	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Gossip Girl (HDTV)	Ghost Whisperer	Medium (HDTV) (N)	News (N)			
	196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Big Bang Th	Gary Unmarr	Two/Half Men	Corner Gas (N)	CS! Miami (HDTV) (N)	News (N)	
	208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Little Mosque	Sophie (HDTV)	Just for Laughs (N)	CBC News: The National	The Hour		
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Chuck (HDTV) (N)	Heroes "Exposed" (N)	Medium (HDTV) (N)	News (N)			
	117	713	10	TVA	Les Gags (SC)	Star Académie:	Annie et ses hommes (SC)	Dr. House (SC)	TVA 22 heures	(10:45) Denis Lévesque			
	-	-	11	QS	Beauté	C't'une joke	CSI: NY (SC)	La Porte des étoiles (SC)	Cent dix pour cent (SC)	Msr Showbiz			
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama	Kheops révélé		Cartouche, Prince de Faubourgs		Professionnels			
	-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV)	Big Bang Th	How I Met	Two/Half Men	Engagement	CSI: Miami (HDTV) (N)	Two/Half Men		
	216	395	14	OMNI	Raymond	Raymond	News (N)	News (N)	Two/Half Men	King	Japan-Korea		
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		The Bachelor (Season Finale) (N)		(10:02) The Bachelor	News (N)			
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)	Vivere II	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia	
	218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	The Soup	How I Met	Engagement	Snoop Father	Snoop Father	News (N)	
	-	361	20	ABC	News (N)	Entertainment	The Bachelor (Season Finale) (N)		(10:02) The Bachelor	News (N)			
	512	396	24	CPAC	La Période de questions	Heure polit.	L'Heure politique		Revue	Période-quest.			
	651	355	25	CTS	Happy Days	Laverne	Michael Corren Show	100 Huntley Street	Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee		
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	24 "Day 7: 6:00PM - 7:00PM; Day 7: 7:00PM - 8:00PM"	News (N)	News (N)	News			
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Stevens Europe	Antiques Roadshow	Blueprint America: The Big Fix	Presidents in Our Back Yard	Charlie Rose			
	205	312	104	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Big Bang Th	Gary Unmarr	Two/Half Men	Corner Gas (N)	CSI: Miami (HDTV) (N)	News (N)	
	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour	CBC News: The National	Miracle on the Hudson	National			
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight	Campbell Brown: No Bias	Larry King Live	Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)					
	406	417	27	net	Snowboarding: World Cup	Skiing FIS Freestyle -- Moguls.	Billiards World Cup of Pool.	Sportsnet Connected	Hockey Central				
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes	Grands reportages (SC)	Le Téléjournal (SC)	RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal			
	400	280	30	TSN	NHL Hockey	Colorado Avalanche at New York Islanders. (HDTV) (Live)		SportsCentre	That's Hockey!	SportsCentre			
	410	403	52	SCR	RaceNight		(9:15) WWE Monday Night Raw		Score Tonight				
	411	457	56	OLN	Dog: The Family Speaks	Survivorman	Mantracker	Dog: The Family Speaks	Survivorman				
	417	406	59	SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time (N)	This Week in NASCAR (N)	SuperCars	Barrett-Jackson	Car Crazy			
	554	544	48	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	Punch	Robot Chicken	American Dad	Moral Orel	
	557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody	
	551	542	65	YTV	Adrenaline Proj	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Prank Patrol	Zixx Level	Falcon Beach	Mystery Hnt.	
	570	580	29	MM	mmttop	Revival	Listed	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	Where You At			
	615	521	31	A&E	CSI: Miami "Free Fall"	Intervention "John"	Intervention (HDTV) (N)	Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal			
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Scariest Police Shootouts!	Scariest Police Shootouts!	Scariest Police Shootouts! 2	Special Forces			
	521	560	34	TLC	Little People	Little People	Little People	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate Plus 8 Road	Little People			
	145	761	35	TV5	Mot de passe	Vie privée, vie publique "Le Courage de s'en sortir"		Club social	Journal TV5				
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits	Kink in Hair	Kink in Hair	Kenny-Spenny	Rent-A-Goalie	Name Is Earl	Testees	House	
	620	523	40	BVO	Circle of Champions	Blood on the Moon	Riverdance: Today's Stars (N)	A Bronx Dream	Law & Order				
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)	MythBusters	Dirty Jobs	Guinea Pig	Guinea Pig	Daily Planet			
	575	583	43	CMT	Hottest Men of Country	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Coyote Ugly		
	601	562	45	SLC	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Til Debt-Part	Tabatha's Salon Takeover	Project Runway Canada	ET Canada			
	625	548	46	COM	Air Force	Just for Laughs	Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Brian Regan: Standing Up	Daily Show		
	294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Out of Time ★★ (2003, Suspense)	Denzel Washington.	Brother	Seinfeld	Family Guy		
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	For Rent	Income Prop.	Property Virgin	Ambrose Price	Petal Pushers	Holmes-Homes	
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)	Lost "The Greater Good"	Star Trek: Voyager		Sarah Connor Chronicles	Stargate SG-1			
	581	566	53	MTV	The City	City Live After	MTV News	Cribs	The Girls of Hesdor Hall	The City	City Live After	MTV Live	
	618	524	54	TROP	TV Made, Do It	News Show	Tube Tales	E News	Make or Break	TV Made, Do It	Planet Soap	Reality	
	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS	Battle 360		Battlefield Mysteries	NCIS		Sea Hunters		
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies (HDTV)	Les Grands travaux (HDTV)		Dernier combat-Allende	Alliance meurtrière (HDTV)	Paradis perdus			
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote	Eyes Down	May-December	McLeod's Daughters (N)	Twist of Faith	Clergy	Poltergeist		
	602	567	62	W	Will & Grace	Friends	How Clean	Kim	Love It or List It	Dollars	Smart Cookies	Maxed Out	
	269	350	70	APTN	Notre Peuple New York.	Terres arct.	Mishkuenita	Henri et Verlin ★★★ (1994, Drame)	Gary Farmer.	Tshinianu			
	621	527	71	TLK	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)	TMZ (N)	etalk	Paris Hilton's British Friend	The Tonight Show-Jay Leno	TMZ			
	603	561	95	FN	Chef at Home	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover	Food Detective	Road Tasted	Hell's Kitchen	Chef School		

cable variety

Some feel Bono's charity work colours U2's music and image.

New U2 album soars with critics

Irish band U2 releases its 12th studio album on Monday and while reviews are generally glowing, critics argue that lead singer Bono's dual role as rock star and campaigning "saviour" may be meddling with the music.

An early contender for biggest record of the year before it even goes on sale, *No Line On The Horizon* has been described as the band's most experimental album since 1991 and possibly its best since then.

"Simply, what all of this amounts to is the best U2 album since *Achtung Baby*," wrote Q magazine at the end of a five-star review. Rolling Stone magazine also awarded it five stars, Mojo magazine four.

The 11 songs tackle fa-

miliar themes of love, war, hope, and, perhaps



Country star Taylor Swift plans to turn her first home into a replica of pals Tim McGraw and Faith Hill's Los Angeles pad after living there while shooting scenes for an episode of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, femalefirst.co.uk reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Patch-up in progress?

RELATIONSHIP Rihanna and Chris Brown are "definitely together" and focusing on a reconciliation, a source tells People.

The pair, who are currently spending time together at Sean (Diddy) Combs' house on Miami Beach's Star Island, are staying indoors as they hash things out, people.com adds.

"They are definitely together and care a great deal about each other," says a Miami source. "They feel like staying in and working through their issues. So far they have not wanted to go out."

Brown, however, did venture out earlier on his own.

On Thursday he hit the water to jet ski with pals. Rihanna and Brown's alleged reconciliation comes nearly three weeks after Brown, 19, allegedly battered the Umbrella singer on Feb. 8.

Learning that his daughter and Chris Brown have reconciled, Rihanna's father says he supports the singer in her decisions, the website adds.

"Whatever road she chooses, I'm

behind her," said Ronald Fenty, when reached by telephone on Barbados.

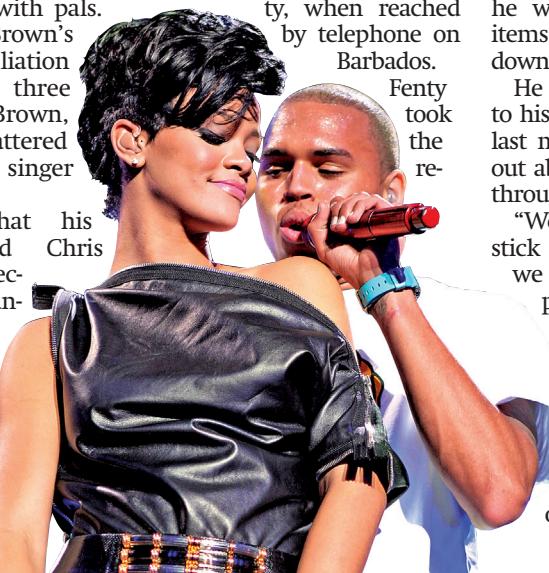
Fenty took the re-

union in stride Saturday, as he worked selling novelty items on a street corner in downtown Bridgetown.

He says he hasn't spoken to his daughter since earlier last month and only found out about the reconciliation through the media.

"We are a family who stick together even though we are apart," he told People. As for Rihanna, Fenty would only say, "She's a smart girl." When asked what he would tell Brown as a father, the website says he demurred: "I have no comment on Chris Brown."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Heigl's hubby asks mom to back off

IN-LAWS Looks like Katherine Heigl's husband has been getting fed up with his mother-in-law's meddling. According to Star magazine, the Grey's Anatomy star's mom, Nancy, has been hounding Heigl's hubby, Josh Kelley. "She often tries

to tell (Josh) what to do," a source tells Star of Nancy. "He's asked her to back off a bit, but she hasn't. So now he just smiles and says nothing."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Lohans work on weight

ADVICE Lindsay Lohan's family has begged her to put on weight, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Mean Girls actress' mother Dina and 15-year-old sister Ali want the thin star to return to the family home in Long Island so they can make sure she is eating.

"That way Dina and Ali can look after her and stop her skipping meals. It would be the best thing for her," a source said. "We know it's stress behind the weight loss."

But the 22-year-old star — who has reportedly lost nearly 14 pounds from her already-slim frame in the past two months — has reportedly refused to leave Los Angeles without her girlfriend, DJ Samantha Ronson.

The source said: "She won't be away from

Sam. She's too insecure." Lohan hasn't even been tempted by junk food bought for her by her worried sister.

The source explained: "For a while, Ali was buying her pizza, fries, chips and all her favourites. But she just sits there, taking a few bites, then picking at the rest. She really isn't fooling anyone."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Too much political correctness: Clint

OPINION Clint Eastwood is tired of everyone being so politically correct. "We're all spending too much time and energy trying to be politically correct about everything," Eastwood told Germany's Der Spiegel.

"We constantly made jokes about different races," the Gran Torino actor said about the good old days. "Every friendly clique had a 'Sam the Jew' or 'Jose the Mexican' — but we didn't think anything of it."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

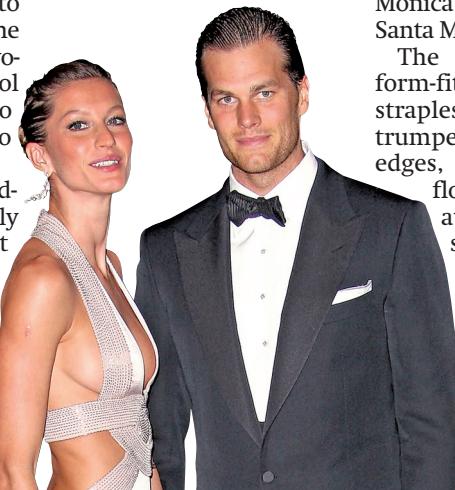
Brady wedding details out

NUPTIALS Usmagazine.com has new exclusive details of Tom Brady's wedding to Gisele Bundchen. The groom donned a gray two-button peak lapel pure wool suit made by Ermengildo Zegna, a source confirms to the magazine.

And — because the wedding was kept so tightly under wraps — he didn't special order it, the source adds.

"I think he definitely wore something that he already had because it was such a last-minute thing," the source says. "Every suit that he

wears is made-to-measure to fit him perfectly."



The couple wed Thursday just before 6 p.m. at the St. Monica Catholic Church in Santa Monica, Calif.

The bride donned a form-fitting ivory lace strapless gown with a trumpet skirt, scalloped edges, long train and a floor-length veil with attached handmade satin roses and attached satin headband, all by Dolce & Gabbana. Her three dogs also wore matching Dolce & Gabbana floral lace collars.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Rhys Meyers back in rehab

ADDICTION Tudors star Jonathan Rhys Meyers has checked himself into rehab for a second time to deal with issues with alcohol, according to Gatecrasher. He previously spent time in the Promises facility in 2005. Rumours



that his drinking had resurfaced popped up last month when the Irish actor failed to appear at an awards show in Dublin where his Showtime series took home 10 trophies.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Rivers takes aim at Angelina

HUMOUR Joan Rivers is known for her sharp sense of humour, and it looks like Angelina Jolie is her latest victim, intouchweekly reports. During an appearance on Rachael Ray, Rivers revealed why she thought Brad Pitt and An-

gelina were sitting so close to the stage at the Oscars.

The comedian said: "I thought what was interesting was that they sat in the front row even though they kind of knew they weren't going to get anything. But I think that she

Jolie 'depressed' over kids, Pitt

FAMILY Angelina Jolie is "really depressed," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actress — who was seen apartment hunting alone in New York recently — has reportedly told partner Brad Pitt she needs some time alone after struggling to cope with the pressures of raising their six young children.

A source said: "Angelina has told Brad she needs her space. She is a fiercely independent person and needs time alone to feel sane and happy."

"Her tendency is to bolt. When she is feeling stressed and overwhelmed she often goes away by herself," the source added.



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"Angelina is in a really low place at the moment and she seems really depressed."

"There is a massive tension between her and Brad and they have been fighting."

Friends claim the couple's relationship is in trouble because Jolie, 33, is becoming increasingly unhappy with 45-year-old Pitt's changing attitude, the website adds.

"Brad is beginning to reassert himself. This appears to be freaking her out," an insider reportedly said.

"It won't have helped that in recent months he's been enjoying more nights out with the boys."

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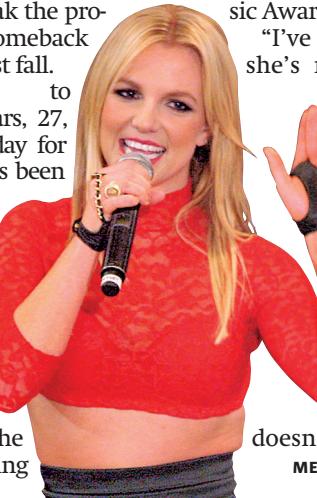
Britney to kick off make-or-break tour

CONCERTS The elaborate costumes are packed. The 16 semis filled with magic props and big-top sets are on the road, people.com reports.

When Britney Spears takes the stage at the New Orleans Arena tomorrow — the opening night of her Circus tour — the stakes will never be higher. After more than two years of personal drama, the tour will either make or break the professional comeback she began last fall.

According to sources, Spears, 27, who left Friday for Louisiana, has been hard at work preparing for the show.

"She's pretty determined," a friend tells People. "She missed singing



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and performing and the freedom of that ... it's what she loves to do, so she's definitely thankful to be doing that again."

Though the pop star seemed to be back in old Britney form when she sang Womanizer on Good Morning America in December, the concert will be her biggest performance since her disastrous appearance at the 2007 MTV Video Music Awards.

"I've got to believe she's ready and will do a professional show," Gary Bongiovanni, editor-in-chief of the concert trade magazine Pollstar, says. "If she doesn't, it's over."

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was hoping that one of the Slumdog kids would fall off. Grab it, take it home. Wouldn't that be great? And then you say, 'Did you win anything?' I got an Oscar, I should give the kid a name!"

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Today
Light snow
-11° / -15°



Tuesday
Variable
-8° / -15°

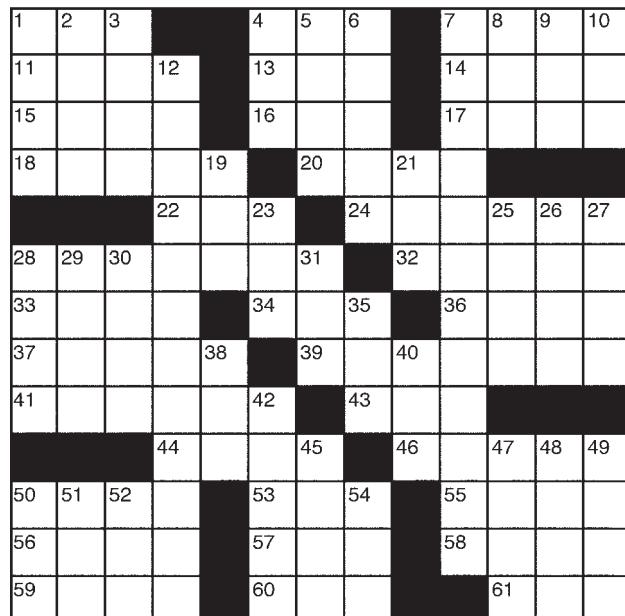


Wednesday
Mainly sunny
-6° / -12°



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Crossword across

- 1 Incorrect
- 4 "Lost" network
- 7 Young tulip?
- 11 Equestrian game
- 13 Scrooge's cry
- 14 Black-and-white cookie
- 15 Basin accessory
- 16 Blackbird
- 17 One
- 18 Pristine
- 20 Singer Campbell
- 22 Pinch
- 24 Completely
- 28 Used mouthwash
- 32 Pancake topper
- 33 Author James
- 34 Wrigley product
- 36 "..., oh, where can —?"
- 37 Support
- 39 Disarmed a bomb
- 41 Pago Pago dweller
- 43 Pale
- 44 Beehive State
- 46 Desolate
- 50 "So be it"
- 53 Total
- 55 Squared away
- 56 Work in the mailroom
- 57 Get older
- 58 Carnival attraction
- 59 Move back and forth
- 60 Lower limb
- 61 Buck's mate

Crossword down

- 1 Oil-cartel acronym
- 2 Poultry
- 3 Run away
- 4 "The — Daba Honeymoon"
- 5 "Pow!"
- 6 Tex-Mex entree
- 7 Seeker of fugitives
- 8 Spigoted vessel
- 9 Floral neckwear
- 10 Automaton, for short
- 11 Anaheim is there
- 12 A纳heim is there
- 19 Zero
- 21 Type measures
- 23 Dowel
- 25 Raw rocks
- 26 Oil paint container
- 27 Newspaper page
- 28 Chatters
- 29 Taj Mahal city
- 30 Paper quantity
- 31 Flop
- 35 Kitten's call
- 38 Nosh
- 40 Mis' neighbors
- 42 Twangy
- 45 Ginormous
- 47 Eager
- 48 Start over
- 49 Dandling site
- 50 Donkey
- 51 Do lawnwork
- 52 Historic time
- 54 "Family Guy" daughter

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

S	I	N	G	S	B	B	C	E	L	M
K	N	E	E	L	O	R	R	N	E	O
I	N	T	R	O	B	A	Y	O	N	E
I	M	B	I	B	E	P	U	R	E	
B	I	Z	S	O	L	H	E	I	S	T
O	R	E	S	W	E	B	E	R		
B	A	N	A	N	A	O	R	A	N	G
L	I	N	G	O	S	E	A	S		
R	E	C	A	P	R	E	S	T		
A	L	U	M	S	E	D	A	N		
C	A	B	I	N	E	T	H	O	U	S
E	T	A	A	L	E	I	N	K	E	D
D	E	N	G	A	L	B	E	E	T	S

3	6	8	7	2	9	1	4	5
2	7	4	1	5	6	8	3	9
9	1	5	3	8	4	7	2	6
7	4	2	9	3	5	6	8	1
1	8	9	4	6	7	3	5	2
6	5	3	2	1	8	9	7	4
5	3	6	8	9	2	4	1	7
4	9	1	5	7	3	2	6	8
8	2	7	6	4	1	5	9	3

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

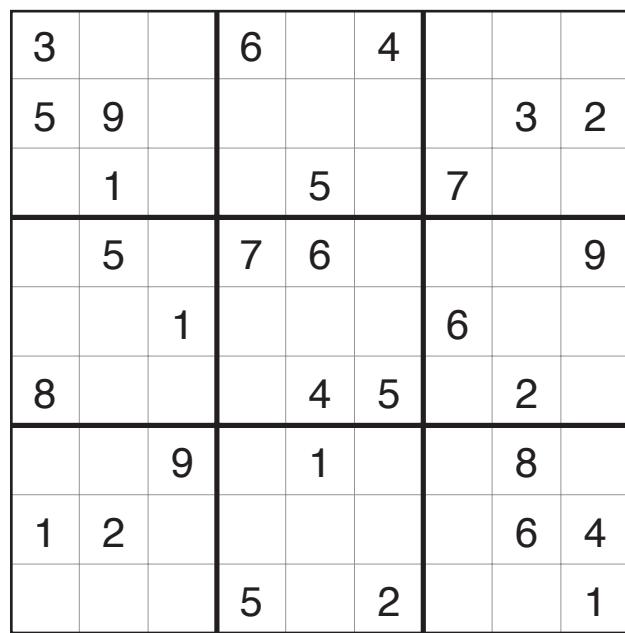
SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

- Under 13 minGenius
- 13-17 minScholar
- 17-21 minSmart
- 21-25 minNot bad
- 25+ minKeep practising

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.



Horoscopes

ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 20

An anxious person pretends to be heroic. Something in the mail will awaken a fine romance. Do something bizarre for an unfamiliar man.



TAURUS

APRIL 21-MAY 21

Work on developing your strength of spirit. Nothing makes sense when a prize is beyond your reach. Anxiety over a confrontation causes a failure.



SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22

An alliance with creative types will increase your income. Someone's distress can be reduced. A voice from the past repairs a broken heart.



GEMINI

MAY 22-JUNE 21

An urgent situation means that stupidity is rampant. A stylish person has a complicated finale. A forecaster has some hidden knowledge.



SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21

Be amused when faced with a difficult decision. Trust an elder when differences are patched up. A love affair fills you with excitement.



CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22

Watch out for siblings in distress. The meaning of sentimental drivel is revealed. Dedicate yourself to initiating a wise discussion.



CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 20

Someone is ready to rethink a situation. You'll feel better after persevering with your original plan. Don't clash with a funny man.



LEO

JULY 23-AUG 23

A good-for-nothing visitor's loneliness will fade away. Issues with a mother are about to cause a hurried departure. Take your time to plan strategy.



AQUARIUS

JAN 21-FEB 18

Grit your teeth when a stingy guy makes you irritable. Date a friend for a chance at love. An insomniac will make you feel guilty.



VIRGO

AUG 24-SEPT 22

Someone is very upset about a shock. Travel delays must be taken into account. Forget about dealing with inconsiderate people.



PISCES

FEB 19-MARCH 20

Don't get flustered when someone celebrates good news. You'll have a disturbing impact by making a decision. A confident speech saves the day.

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